



Epidemiological report of SARS-CoV-2 on the Dutch Caribbean CAS- and BES-islands:

Week 33 (August 12th - August 18th, 2021)

Produced by the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment of the Netherlands - RIVM
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For general information on surveillance of COVID-19 on the CAS-BES-islands, see the next page.

Summary

The surge in (active) SARS-CoV-2 infections is placing a strain on hospitals on the CAS-islands. In the week of August 12-18, 2021, an additional 1,501 people received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result. Approximately 55% of these cases were on Aruba. The rise in transmission of the Delta variant, which has become the dominant strain on the CAS islands and Bonaire for several weeks, while expected, continues to be alarming. The next most common strain is the B.1.621 variant, often detected in Colombia, which accounts for 13.3% of the sequenced samples on Bonaire currently.

On Aruba, 663 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result last week, a small increase compared to the previous week (631/100,000 on August 11th). More children under 18 years old are becoming infected with the virus. The number of hospital admissions is increasing at a worrying rate: There are currently 70 hospital admissions, of which 9 in the ICU in Aruba, 13 in the ICU in Colombia, and 2 in the gynaecology/pregnancy ward. On August 11th there were 40 people hospitalized with or because of COVID-19, which is nearly 43% less. Hospital data show that, since the start of the 4th wave, 82% of hospital admissions, 87% of ICU admissions and 77% of COVID-related deaths have been among unvaccinated persons. The number of COVID-related deaths is rising at a worrying speed. Last week, 8 people on the island died from or with COVID-19. A similar weekly mortality rate was last seen in April 2021 (week 14). The island has reinforced public health measures as of August 12th. Nightlife and bars are closed, the indoor mask mandate has been reinstated, and schools will remain closed until September 1st.

On Bonaire, the number of positive SARS-CoV-2 test results continues to rise. Between August 12th and 18th, 112 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, compared to 86/100,000 a week earlier. These mainly concern locally acquired infections. The proportion of positive tests was also higher for the first time in three weeks, increasing from 1.0% to 3.0%. The number of tests taken fell last week, partly due to changes in travel policy to the Netherlands. The large increase in the number of positive reports is related, among other things, to one cluster in the private setting. Public health measures were tightened as of August 13th. Restaurants and bars are obliged to close at midnight; at events, weddings and funerals a maximum of 100 guests is allowed; there is a maximum of 2 persons per household allowed in shops and supermarkets; and nightclubs have been closed. Public officials from Bonaire, on the other hand, did announce the restart of cruise tourism on the island as of September 2021.

On Curaçao, 255 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result last week, a decline compared to a week earlier (303/100,000 on August 11th). More than 8% of people who tested positive had travelled abroad in the last two weeks, of whom 45% had been to The Netherlands. Related hospitalisations continue to climb. There are currently 36 hospital admissions, 15 of which are in the ICU. The jump in cases has moved the government to reimpose certain restrictions for a duration of three weeks as of August 13th. Health officials have reimposed the night curfew between 0.00 and 4.30 AM, and events now have a maximum capacity of 100 guests. Last week, 3 people on the island died from or with SARS-CoV-2. That is still a fraction of the number of deaths that occurred during the previous wave early April 2021, when 22 deaths were reported in one week time (week 16).

On Dutch Sint Maarten, the number of SARS-CoV-2 infections is alarming. Last week, 361 people per 100,000 inhabitants received a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, a small decrease compared to a week earlier (385/100,000 on August 11th). There are currently 18 COVID-related hospitalizations on the Dutch side of the island, 7 of which are in the ICU. This is the highest hospital occupancy since the start of the outbreak in 2020. Last week, 4 people died from or with SARS-CoV-2 on the Dutch side of the island; on the French side 1 new

death was reported. The incidence on the French side of the island continues to climb (572/100,000 in week 32) compared to a week earlier (538/100,000 in week 31). This appears to be highest among 15-44 year-olds. A further increase in the number of hospital admissions is also reported on the French side of the island: In week 32, 28 COVID-related admissions were registered, compared to 14 a week earlier. On the Dutch side of the island, the ban on social gatherings will remain in force for the time being. The closing time of 23:00 for (night)clubs and (beach)bars is still valid and will be evaluated in two weeks.

A new SARS-CoV-2 infection was reported on 15 August on Saba. It concerns an unvaccinated resident who developed mild symptoms after a medical visit to St Maarten, and tested positive during the quarantine period upon return. As of August 16, there will be a stricter travel policy on the CAS-islands on the island. All incoming travellers are required to present a negative PCR result not older than 72 hours upon arrival and must undergo a retest on day 5. Unvaccinated people are also required to quarantine for 5 days.

A new SARS-CoV-2 infection was reported on St. Eustatius on August 16th. This concerns a delayed record of a previously counted case. The island has tightened measures as of August 13th. The CAS-islands are considered a high-risk area, the use of a face mask is required for employees and visitors to public areas, and playing live music is no longer allowed.

Information on surveillance of COVID-19 on the CAS- and BES-islands

The Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands entails the countries Curaçao, Aruba, and Dutch St Maarten (CAS-islands), as well as the overseas municipalities Bonaire, St Eustatius, and Saba (BES-islands). Surveillance data of SARS-CoV-2 cases is collected on each island in collaboration with local medical professionals, laboratories, and public health departments. These surveillance data are shared by the CAS- and BES-islands through daily updates and stored in the SARS-CoV-2 IHR Daily Overview Dutch Caribbean; an overview of the spread of SARS-CoV-2 on the CAS- and BES-islands.

This report has been generated using surveillance data registered at the RIVM between March 22nd 2020 and 18 August 2021. Sometimes surveillance data is reported to the RIVM one or multiple days later than documented on the islands. The data presented in this report are based on the date of registration at the RIVM. Because islands retrospectively correct surveillance data, the crude estimates in this report may differ slightly from the data shared by each island. The data reported here may lag behind in case more recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM by respective islands.

Everyone with symptoms of COVID-19 can get tested. However, it is plausible that not all individuals with a SARS-CoV-2 infection are tested. The actual numbers of cases can therefore be higher than the numbers reported here. The CAS- and BES-islands also register when individuals with a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result have recovered. These data are used to report the current number of active cases in Table 3. The number of active cases refers to the number of individuals who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 and who have not yet recovered at the time of producing this report.

Disclaimer

Though this weekly report has been produced with the utmost care, it could possibly contain errors. Feedback on this overview is welcome.

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1 Overview of reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on the CAS- and BES-islands

Table 1: Number of laboratory confirmed cases with a positive test result for SARS-CoV-2 over the past 2 weeks, as reported to the RIVM by the CAS- and BES-islands

Island	Date: from-until	Number of performed tests	Number of laboratory confirmed tests with positive test result	Positivity rate %
Aruba ¹	02-08-2021 - 08-08-2021	197188	690	0.3
	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	8458	895	10.6
Bonaire	02-08-2021 - 08-08-2021	2028	15	0.7
	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	836	25	3
Curaçao ²	02-08-2021 - 08-08-2021	13837	453	3.3
	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	15041	448	3
Saba ³	02-08-2021 - 08-08-2021	1345	1	0.1
	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	119	1	0.8
Sint Eustatius	02-08-2021 - 08-08-2021	511	2	0.4
	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	162	1	0.6
Sint Maarten ⁴	02-08-2021 - 08-08-2021	-	-	-
	09-08-2021 - 15-08-2021	-	-	-

¹ This estimate concerns a crude positivity rate for Aruba. The Directie Volksgezondheid Aruba reports a corrected positivity rate through: <https://www.facebook.com/desparuba>.

² The Public Health Department on Curaçao estimates a corrected positivity rate. Therefore, estimates presented here may differ from positivity rates reported by Curaçao.

³ A '-' value indicates insufficient data was reported to the RIVM to report in this table.

⁴ The positivity rate for Dutch St Maarten has been estimated using data of the PCR tests analyzed only. Therefore, estimates presented here may differ from positivity rates reported by Dutch St Maarten (SLS), as those include data of rapid antigen tests as well.

Table 2: Number of laboratory confirmed cases with a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result, number of hospital admissions¹ and number of deceased cases, cumulative and for the previous week, on the CAS- and BES-islands, as reported to RIVM

Island	Cumulative			Previous week ²	
	Number of cases	Hospital admissions	Deceased	Number of cases	Deceased
Aruba	13621	666	121	830	8
Bonaire	1732	66	17	26	0
Curaçao	14751	629	135	418	3
Saba	9	1	0	1	0
Sint Eustatius	24	0	0	1	0
Sint Maarten	3313	178	42	225	4
Totaal	33450	1540	315	1501	15

¹ The number of hospital admissions cannot be displayed for the previous week due to a delay in reporting these data. The current number of persons hospitalized due to or with COVID-19 is reported in Table 3.

² These have been reported to the RIVM between August 12th and August 18th, 2021.

Table 3: Current number of active SARS-CoV-2 cases and status of COVID-19 hospital occupancy on the CAS- and BES-islands, as reported to RIVM^{1,2}

Island	Number of active cases	Number of persons with COVID-19 on general hospital ward	Number of persons with COVID-19 hospitalized in the ICU	Oversees occupancy in Colombia
Aruba	1076	48	9	13
Bonaire	26	1	0	0
Curaçao	635	21	15	0
Saba	1	0	0	0
Sint Eustatius	3	0	0	0
Sint Maarten	347	11	7	0
Totaal	2088	81	31	13

¹ Het aantal actieve SARS-CoV-2 infecties is gedefinieerd als het aantal personen met een SARS-CoV-2 infectie waarvan herstel nog niet door de lokale GGD is geregistreerd ten tijde van registratie bij het RIVM. Deze aantallen kunnen achterlopen wanneer eilanden over gelimiteerde BCO capaciteit beschikken.

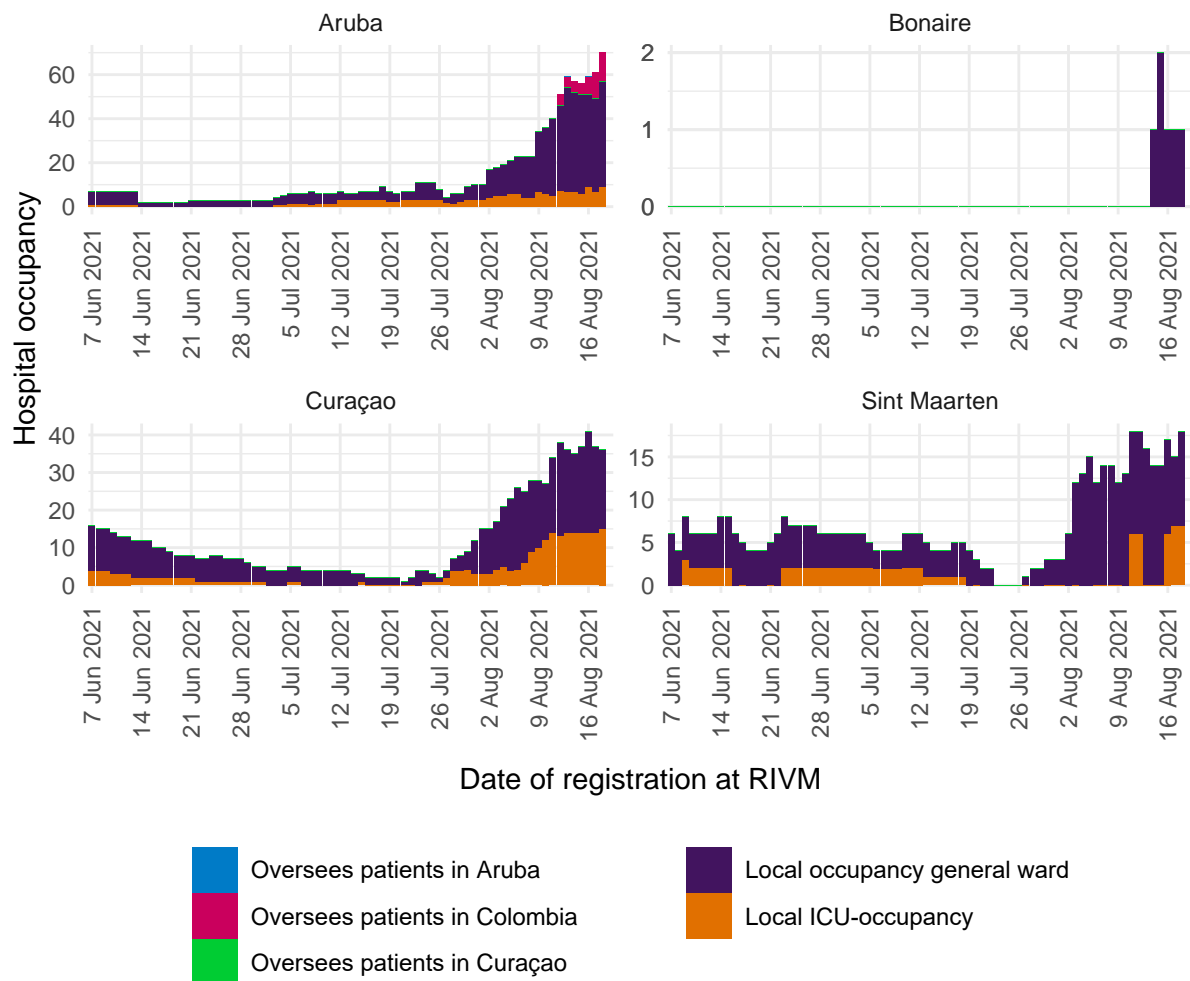


Figure 1: Progression of COVID-related hospital occupation over time ^{1,2,3,4,5}

¹ This figure presents the number of reported persons who have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 during or before admission on the general hospital ward and/or ICU.

² The orange data represent the local ICU-occupation over time, per island. The purple data represent the occupation of the general hospital ward over time, per island.

³ Due to the low number of hospitalised patients on Saba en St Eustatius, these islands have not been included in this graph.

⁴ Based on the most recent data registered for Bonaire, the admission status is unknown for 234 persons who have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 since January 1st, 2021. These cases have not been included in this graph.

⁵ The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

Table 4: SARS-CoV-2 incidence rate per 100,000 residents on the CAS- and BES-islands¹, as reported to RIVM

Island	Incidence per 100,000 residents	
	Previous week ²	Previous two weeks ³
Aruba	552	1192
Bonaire	108	194
Curaçao	216	514
Saba	52	52
Sint Eustatius	32	127
Sint Maarten	297	677

¹ The calculated incidence rates include the estimated number of undocumented migrants on each island, see Table 5.

² The incidence rate per 100,000 persons, for the previous week, has been calculated from 12 August 2021 until 18 August 2021.

³ The incidence rate per 100,000 residents, for the previous two weeks, has been calculated from 5 August 2021 until 18 August 2021.

Table 5: Number of residents and acreage of the CAS- and BES-islands¹

Island	Capital city	Residents	Acreage	Political status
Aruba	Oranjestad	125.282	180 km ²	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Bonaire	Kralendijk	23.173	288 km ²	Dutch municipality
Curaçao	Willemstad	164.223	444 km ²	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Saba	The Bottom	1.918	13 km ²	Dutch municipality
Sint Maarten	Philipsburg	62.323	34 km ²	Country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands
Sint Eustatius	Oranjestad	3.142	21 km ²	Dutch municipality

¹ These numbers refer to the 2021 population sizes. Each island counts a substantial population of undocumented migrants. The reported incidence rates include the estimated population of undocumented migrants. On Aruba, Curaçao, and Dutch St Maarten the population size is estimated to be between 8,000 and 20,000 migrants in 2021. On Bonaire the population size is estimated around 1,400 migrants. These data are relevant to include as these populations are difficult to reach for local public health services and often have less access to curative care.

2 SARS-CoV-2 progression over time

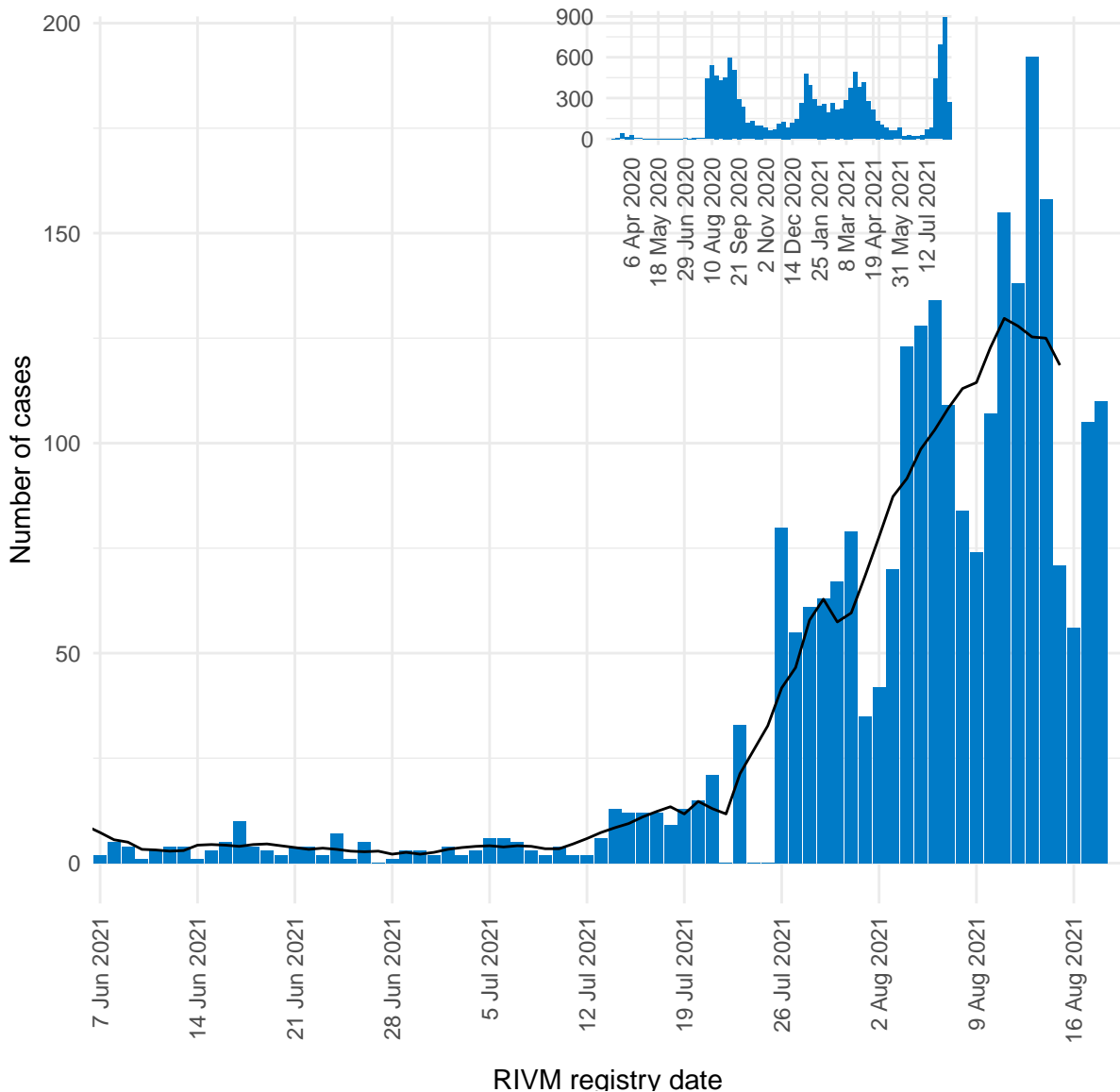


Figure 2: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Aruba, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

² The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

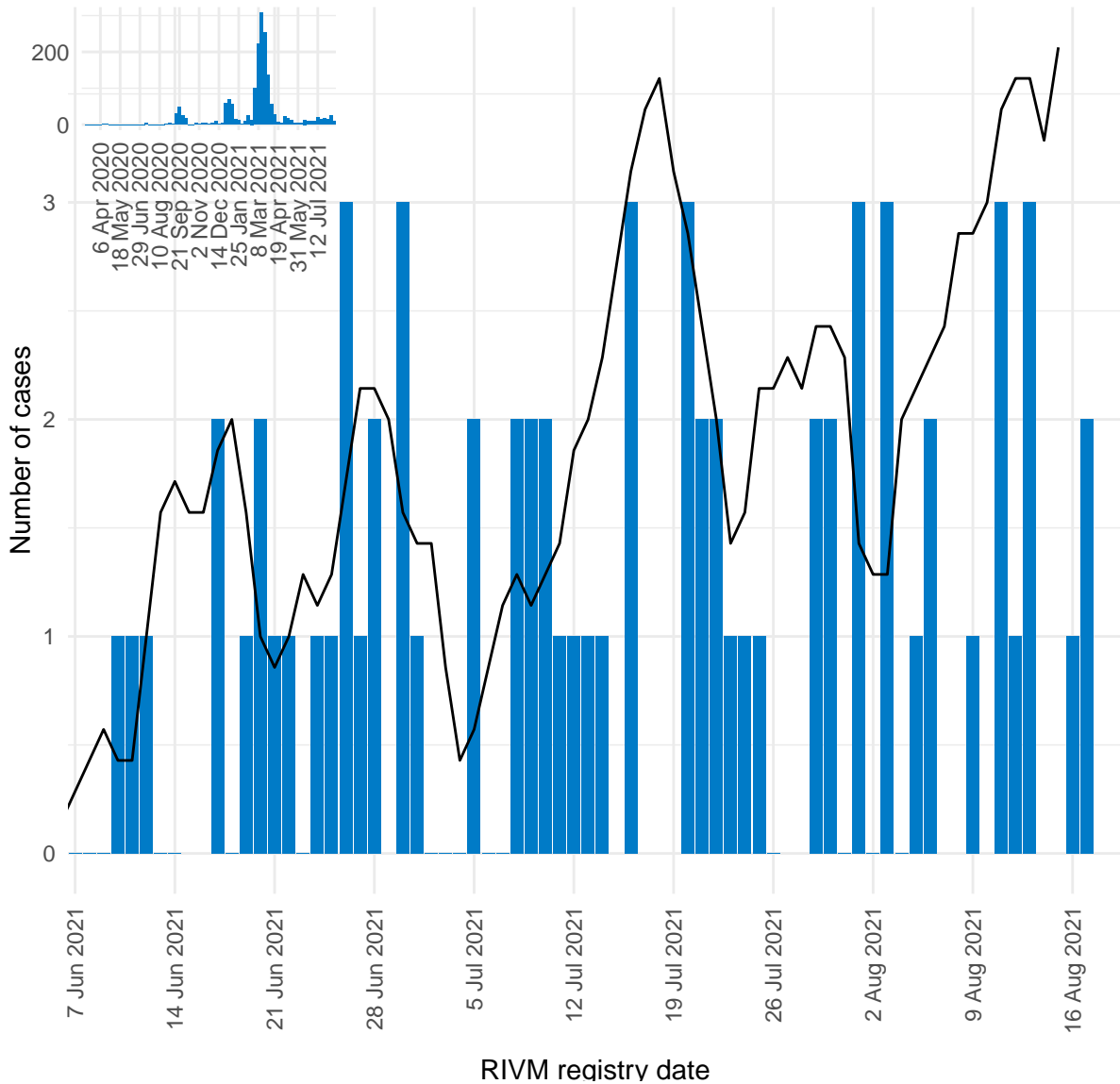


Figure 3: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Bonaire, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

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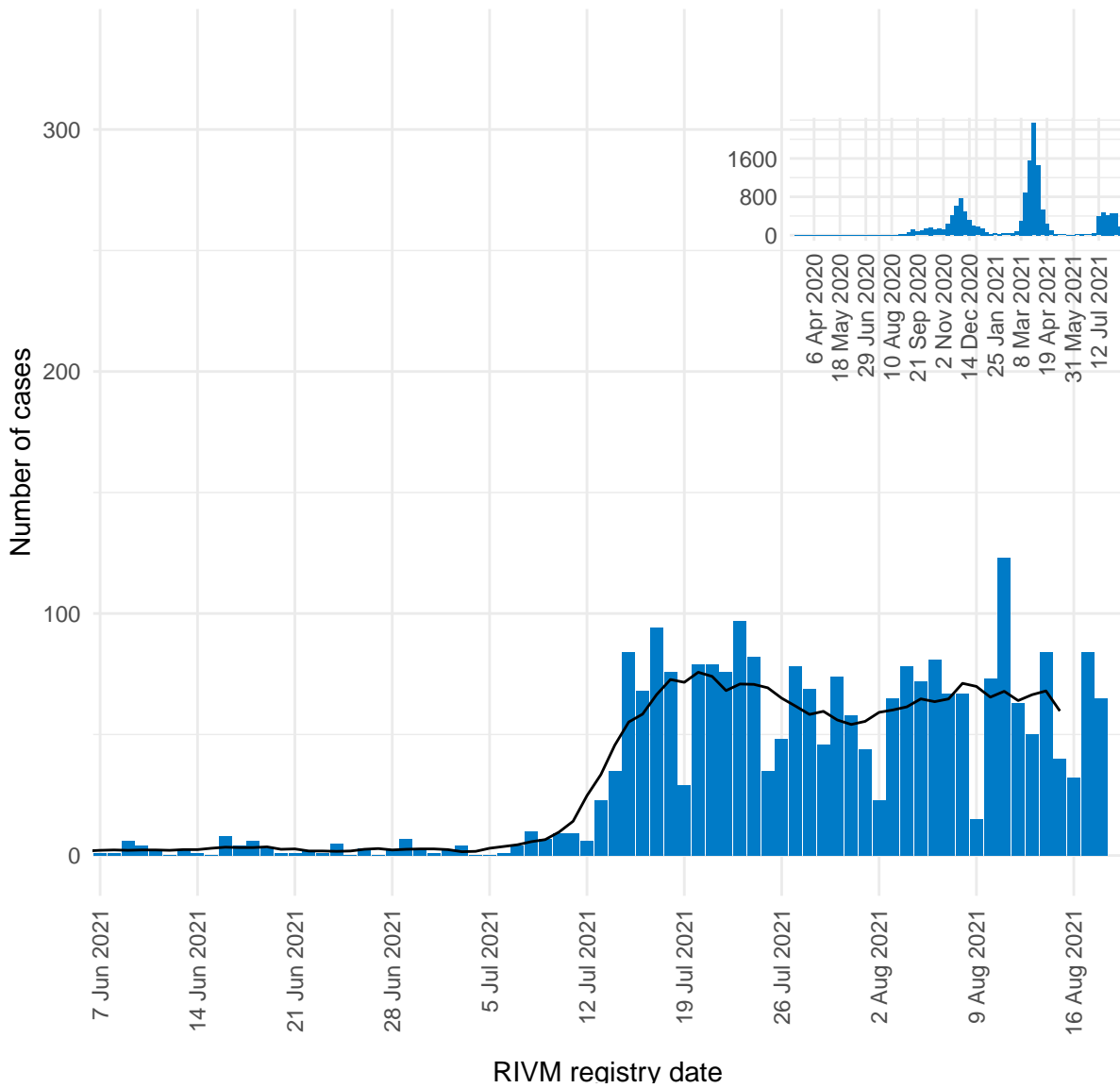


Figure 4: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Curaçao, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

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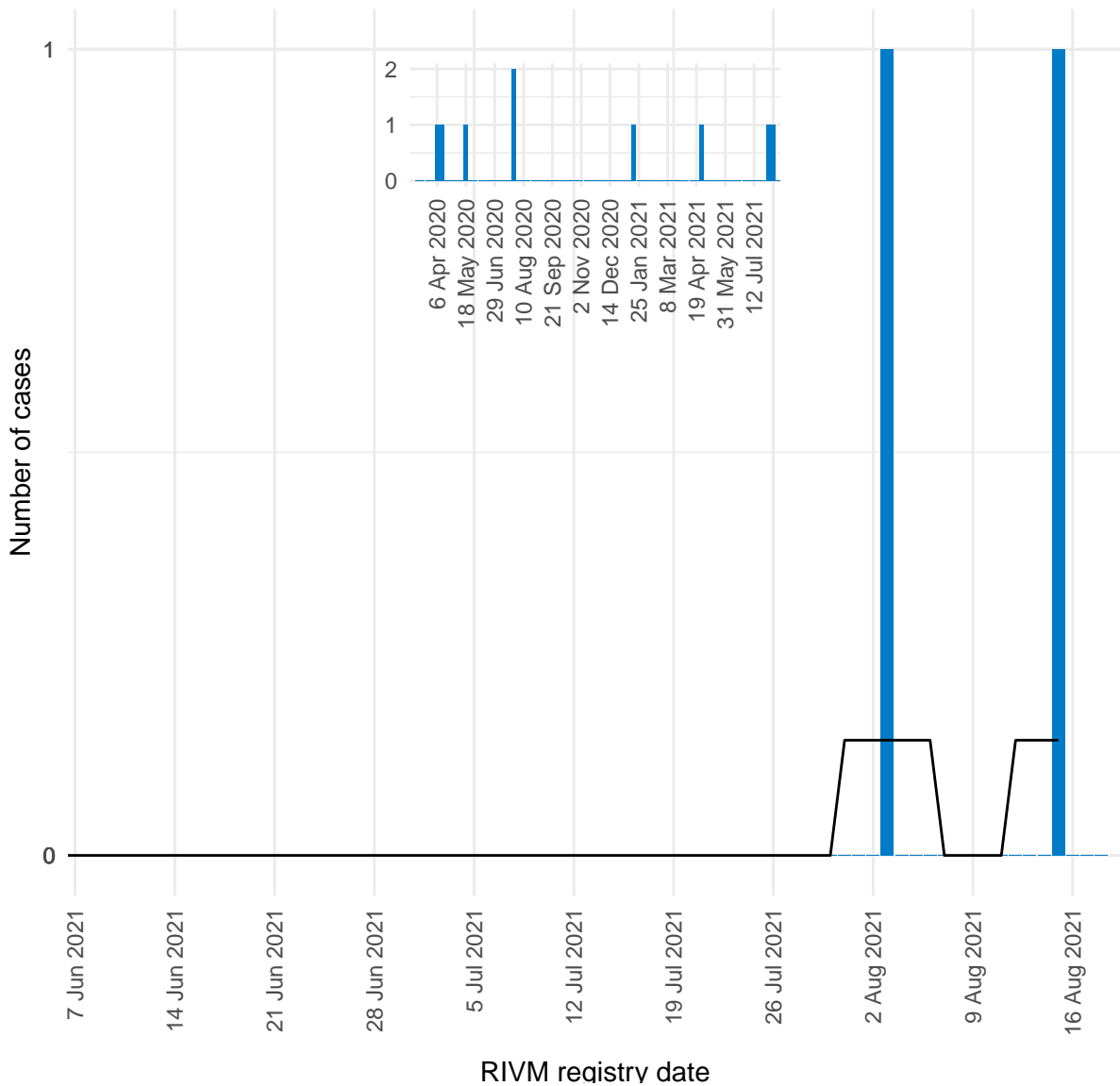


Figure 5: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Saba, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

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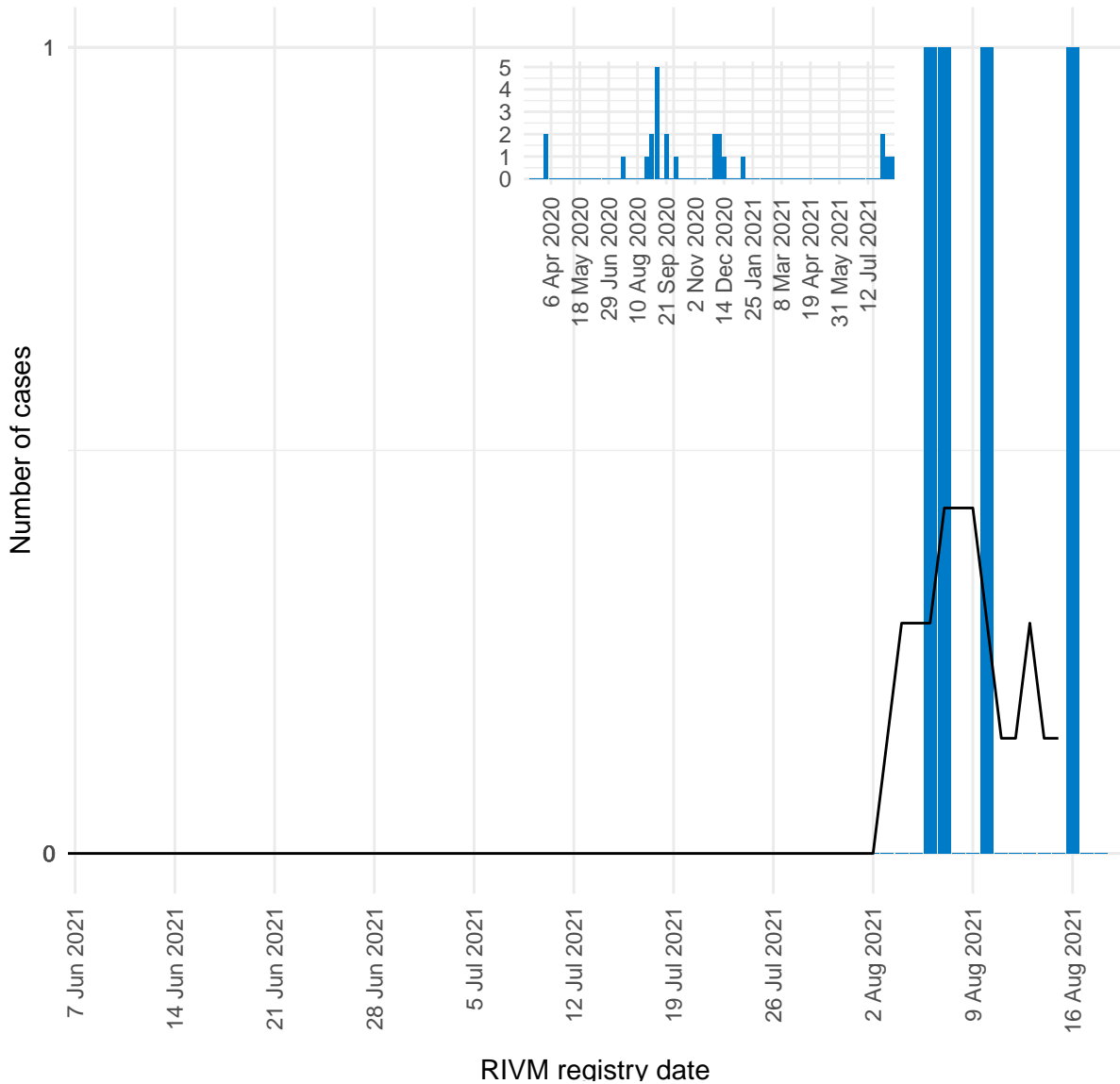


Figure 6: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on St Eustatius, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

² The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

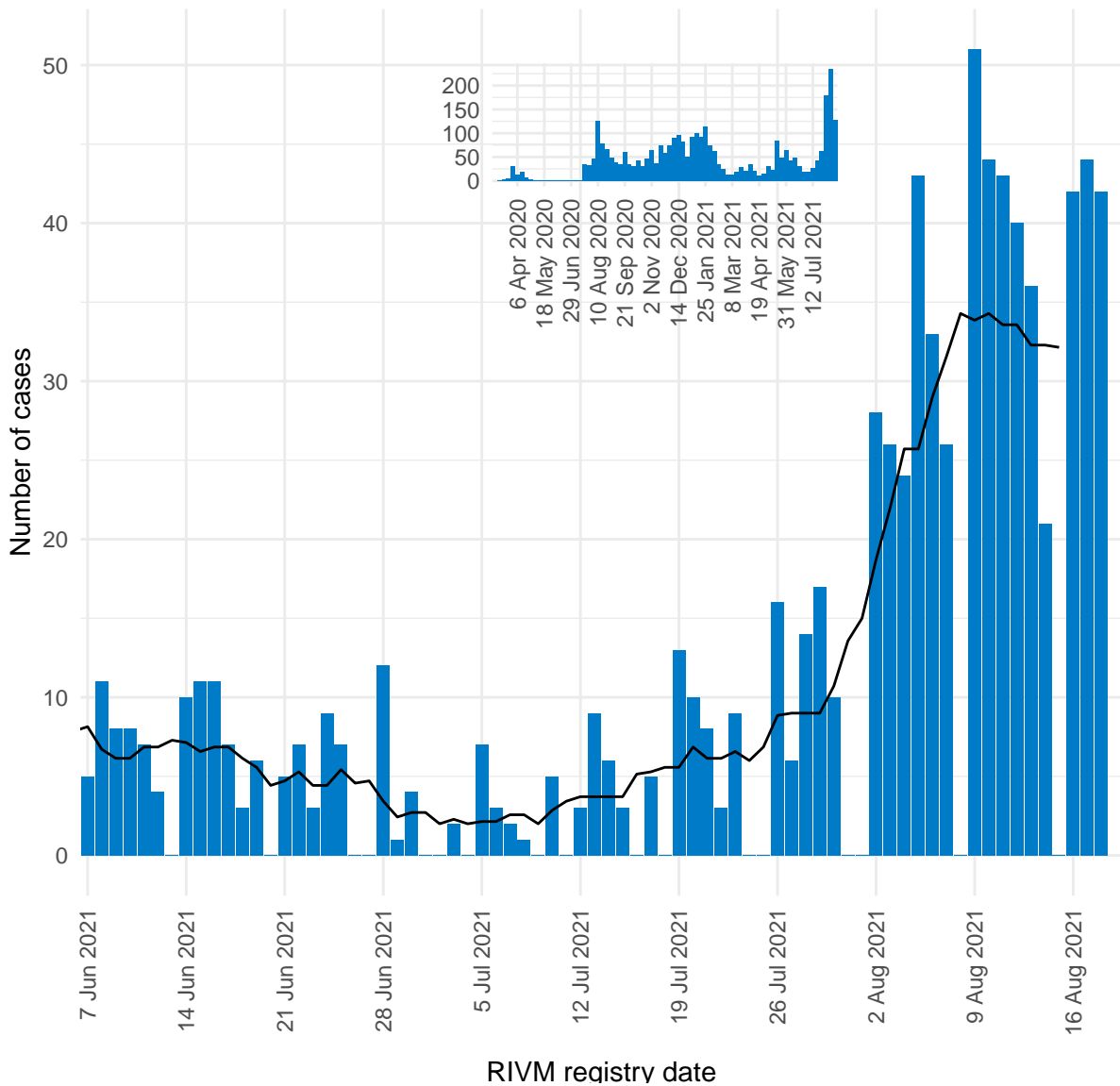


Figure 7: Number of daily reported SARS-CoV-2 cases on Dutch St Maarten, presented by RIVM registry date^{1,2}.

¹ This figure displays the daily number of new SARS-CoV-2 by date of reporting to the RIVM. The black line represents the 7-day moving average of new infections. The vertical axes of figures 1-6 differ due to dissimilarities in the quantity of cases between the islands.

² The reported data has been presented by the date of reporting to the RIVM. These numbers can lag behind when the most recent data has not yet been reported to the RIVM.

3 SARS-CoV-2 three week average incidence rate, progression over time

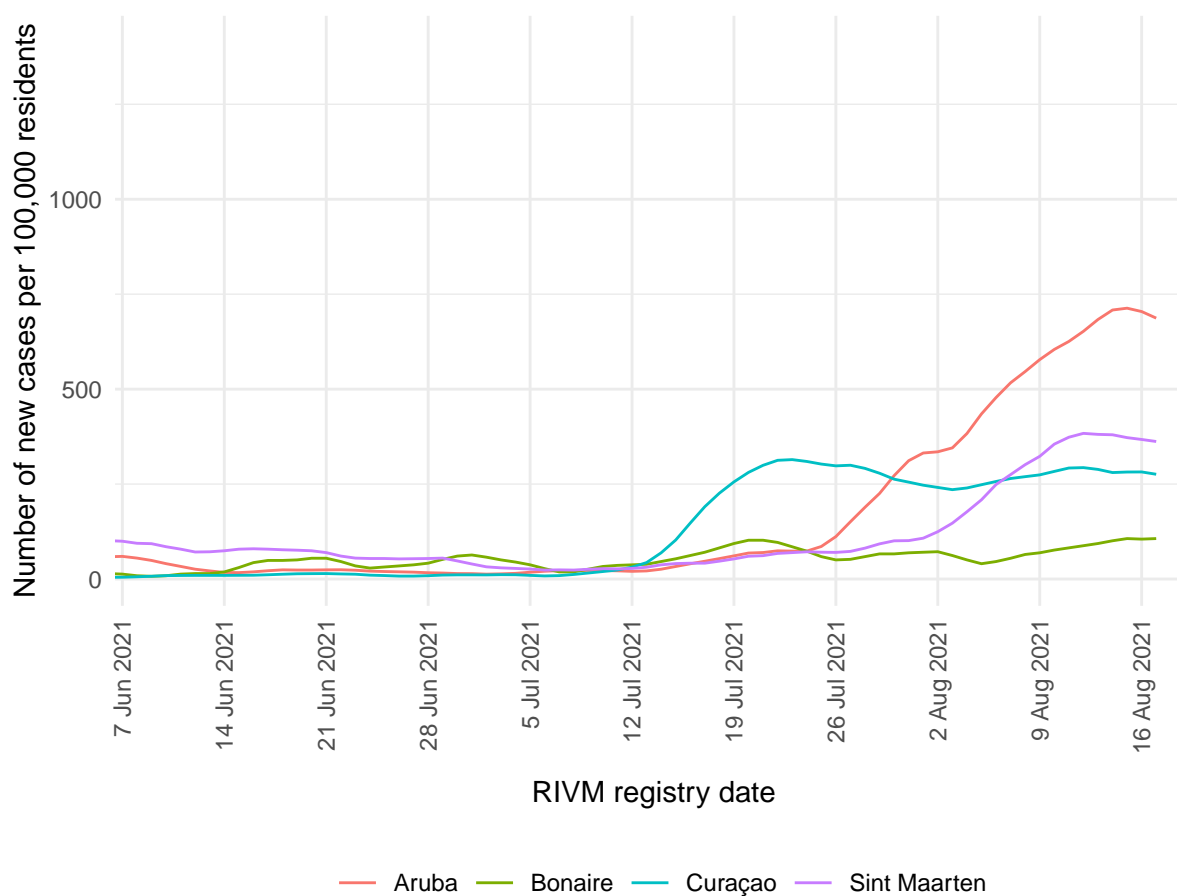


Figure 8: Three week average number of reported cases per 100,000 residents by RIVM registry date, on Curaçao, Aruba, Dutch St Maarten, and Bonaire^{1,2}.

¹ This figure displays the 3-week average incidence rate per island per 100,000 residents, including the population of undocumented migrants on each island. Each line on the vertical axis indicates a weekly average of the incidence rate (defined as the number of new cases per 100,000 persons per week, over the total population) over a period of three weeks. For example: the reported value on January 4th 2021, is the weekly average of the incidence rate between December 28th, 2020 and January 11th, 2021.

² Due to the small number of reported cases on Saba and St Eustatius, these islands have not been included in this figure.

4 Number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered on the CAS-BES islands

Table 6: Number of first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered until 16 August 2021¹.

	Aruba	Bonaire	Curaçao	Saba	Sint Eu- statius	Sint Maarten ²
Number of persons who have received their first dosis (aged 12+ years)	73514	15913	94439	1530	1404	25086
Number of persons who have received their first and second dosis (aged 12+ years)	67602	13716	84698	1439	1301	22329
Number of fully vaccinated persons (aged 12+ years) ³	68145	13716	85717	1439	1301	22329
Number of high risk persons (aged 18-59 years) who have received their first dosis ^{4,5}	3959	-	9037	-	-	4479
Number of fully vaccinated high risk persons (aged 18-59 years) ⁵	3765	-	8345	-	-	2834

¹ The vaccination coverage data presented here is reported by the islands to VWS on a weekly basis. These data may lag behind from the vaccination coverage data presented by the island officials.

² These data refer to the numbers of vaccinated persons on the Dutch side of St Maarten. Vaccination coverage on the French side of St Martin is reported by Santé Publique France on a weekly basis.

³ The number of fully vaccinated persons is defined as the number of completed vaccinations. This also includes persons who only require one dose of vaccine to be considered as fully vaccinated, due to having a history of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Both Aruba and Curaçao are reporting these data separately from the number of persons who have received two doses of vaccine. Dutch St Maarten and the BES-islands are currently not reporting these data. The number of completed vaccinations on those islands may therefore be an underestimation.

⁴ For the BES islands, no information was collected about high- and low-risk groups, because all residents within this age group could register for a vaccination at the same time.

⁵ Vaccination data for persons aged 60+ cannot be displayed here because these data are not reported to RIVM.

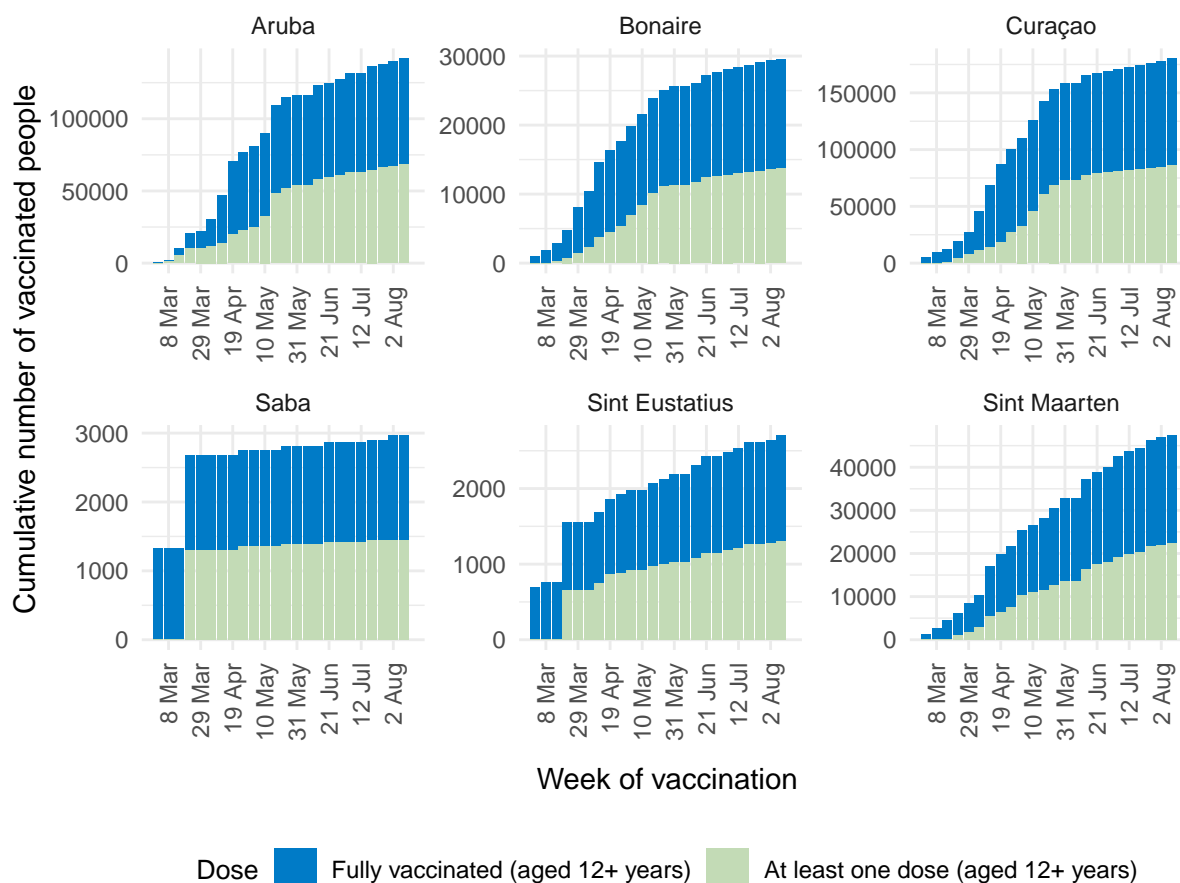


Figure 9: Number of first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered, cumulative by vaccination date, until 16 August 2021^{1,2,3}.

¹ The vaccination coverage data presented here is reported by the islands to VWS on a weekly basis. These data may lag behind from the vaccination coverage data presented by the island officials.

² These data refer to the numbers of vaccinated persons on the Dutch side of St Maarten. Vaccination coverage on the French side of St Martin is reported by Santé Publique France on a weekly basis.

³ The number of fully vaccinated persons is defined as the number of completed vaccinations. This also includes persons who only require one dose of vaccine to be considered as fully vaccinated, due to having a history of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Both Aruba and Curaçao are reporting these data separately from the number of persons who have received two doses of vaccine. Dutch St Maarten and the BES-islands are currently not reporting these data. The number of completed vaccinations on those islands may therefore be an underestimation.

5 Vaccination coverage on the CAS-BES islands

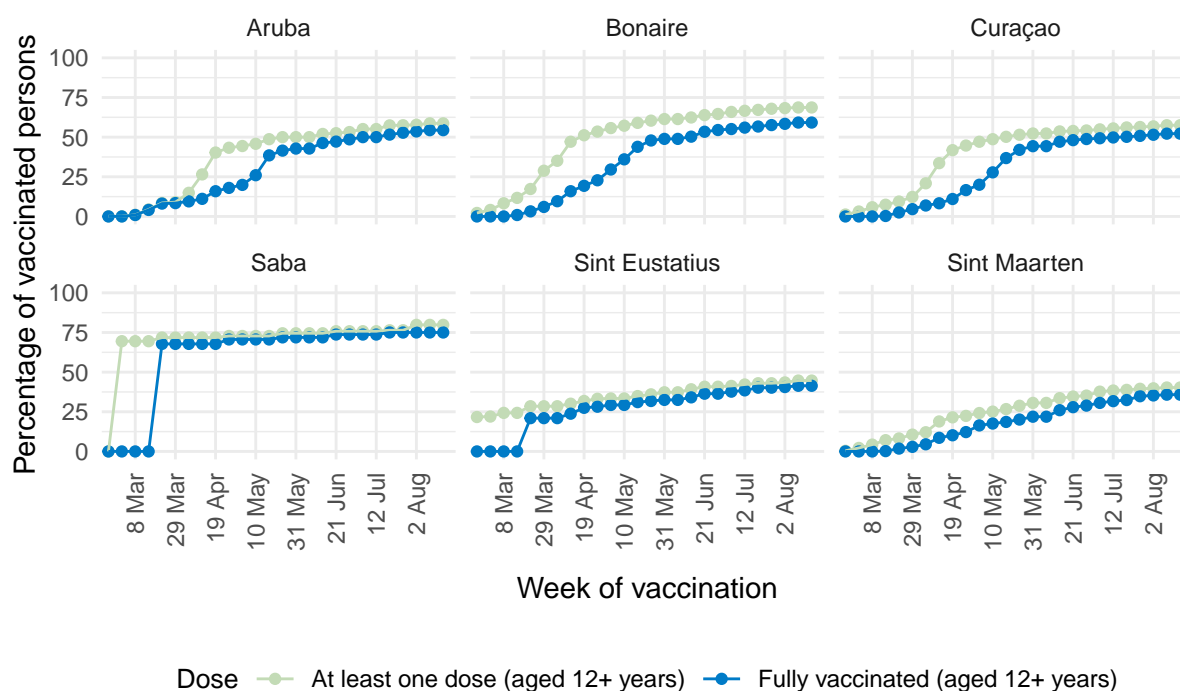


Figure 10: Percentage of residents aged 12 years or older who have received at least one vaccination dose and the percentage of residents aged 12 or older who have been fully vaccinated according to the current vaccination schedule of the vaccines used¹⁻⁴.

¹ The vaccination coverage data presented here is reported by the islands to VWS on a weekly basis. These data may lag behind from the vaccination coverage data presented by the island officials.

² These data refer to the numbers of vaccinated persons on the Dutch side of St Maarten. Vaccination coverage on the French side of St Martin is reported by Santé Publique France on a weekly basis.

³ The vaccination coverage is defined as: Persons aged 12+ who have received at least one dose. A one-dose schedule is sufficient for persons who have indicated that they have demonstrably experienced COVID-19 in the past six months. They are included in the 'fully vaccinated' percentages presented in this figure. These numbers are reported separately per week 21 by Curaçao and week 22 by Aruba.

⁴ The number of fully vaccinated persons is defined as the number of completed vaccinations. This also includes persons who only require one dose of vaccine to be considered as fully vaccinated, due to having a history of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Both Aruba and Curaçao are reporting these data separately from the number of persons who have received two doses of vaccine. Dutch St Maarten and the BES-islands are currently not reporting these data. The number of completed vaccinations on those islands may therefore be an underestimation.